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PRESS RELEASE

Training on Continuous Quality Improvement of Health Services within the Project “Partnership: Health Maternity - Future of Astana”

January 30, 2007, Astana –About 70 physicians from Astana maternity hospitals and family group practices have been trained in continuous quality improvement from January 21-30, 2008. The training has been delivered within the project “Partnership: Health Maternity - Future of Astana” implemented by the Health Department of Astana City, the Kazakhstan Association of Family Practitioners and the USAID project ZdravPlus under the sponsorship from ExxonMobil Kazakhstan Inc. and USAID.

Training will help Astana maternity hospitals and family clinics “Demeu” and “Shipager” that participate in the project improve quality of care in their facilities. The new quality improvement systems will engage the health facility staff in a continuous process of self-evaluation of the provided services and facilitate improvements in the quality of care.

Maternal and child health protection is a priority of health care development in the country. With sponsorship from ExxonMobil and USAID, the project “Partnership: Health Maternity - Future of Astana” furthers these priority goals through the introduction of the international health care principles. Training in continuous quality improvement is an integral part of this project aimed to improve the effectiveness of health care. Continuous quality improvement, primarily, is a continuous self-assessment of whether the whole team or individual providers follow international standards that have been taught to them. While the health facility team starts introducing changes in their operation, the workers themselves monitor an impact of the changes made. A constant progression from one goal to another takes place and quality improves.

To improve the quality of maternal and child care, from 2006-2008, the project “Partnership: Health Maternity - Future of Astana” has trained medical staff at the Astana city maternity hospitals and family practices in modern practices in working with pregnant women and their families. The project also helped to open Birth Preparedness Classes at the Maternity Hospital #1, Perinatal Center, and the family group practice “Demeu,” which have already provided training to more than 6000 pregnant women in Astana.

Project ZdravPlus is one of the many USAID projects in Kazakhstan. Since 1992, the American people through USAID have provided over \$500 million in assistance of Kazakhstan’s economy, health care, and democratic institutions.

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